

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF MEN
<http://www.nh.gov/csm>
Minutes for the Thirty-First Commission Meeting
October 27, 2006 1-4 PM
Legislative Office Building Room 206, Concord, NH

These minutes were taken by Scott Garman.

Members Present: Joe Mastromarino, Scott Garman, Michael Geanoulis, Marshall Hickok.

Members Absent: Stephen Gorin, David Lauren, Gus Lerandau.

September Meeting Problems:

Joe Mastromarino opened the meeting and apologized for the regrettable mishaps last month where a quorum was not present for the September meeting. In the future, even if it is clear that a quorum will not be present at our scheduled meeting, remaining members are still expected to attend in the event that members of the public show up to testify. This happened during the September meeting, and fortunately Mike Geanoulis was present and able to speak with members of the public who drove down from northern NH to discuss experiences of discrimination against fathers in family court and birth certificate laws.

Secretary's Report:

Scott Garman presented a draft of the August meeting minutes. Marshall Hickok moved to accept the minutes as presented. Michael Geanoulis seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Dr. Wade Horn Invitation:

Joe Mastromarino attempted to contact Dr. Horn's office at the federal Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) last month, but was unable to contact or leave a message for Dr. Horn because his voice mail was full. Joe's attempts to contact someone else in that department were unsuccessful. Mike Geanoulis suggested sending a letter instead. Joe agreed and would send one via certified mail to ensure it gets received. Joe asked Rep. David Bickford if he'd be willing to sign the request to help raise its profile, and Rep. Bickford agreed to do so.

Goals and Objectives for Selecting Speakers:

Joe Mastromarino gave Marshall Hickok the floor to discuss issues regarding the selection and invitation of guest speakers.

Marshall noted that logistically we are at a disadvantage when trying to schedule speakers in advance without a common calendar. Scott Garman suggested setting up an on-line, free calendar account which members could have access to for scheduling events, and agreed to go forward and create this account and e-mail the login information to the rest of the Commission within a few days.

Marshall noted that more attention should be given to the media impact of inviting speakers, and that we should strive to obtain positive media attention from guest speaker events along the lines of the Dr. Murray Straus meeting that was held a few months ago. Also, speakers should be brought in to do more than simply raise consciousness about issues - they should be pressed to provide concrete solutions or examples of problems we can use to help find solutions, particularly in the legislative arena.

Public Input:

Joe Mastromarino noted that some members of the public were present with young children, and that an opportunity for the public to testify would start now instead of at the end of the meeting.

Joe Mixon introduced himself as the NH state coordinator of the Fathers 4 Justice organization, and that he'd be willing to offer contacts and assistance on any issues. Mr. Mixon claimed to have contacts with about a thousand men in NH who have experienced problems in family courts.

David Johnson spoke about personal experiences with problems in the family courts, and suggested that bringing forward police officers who routinely take domestic violence calls to testify would be informative, because these people see the reality of the situation on a daily basis. David also suggested that the Commission get involved in providing feedback to the Executive Council when a Marital Master is appointed or renewed.

Legislative Report:

Marshall Hickok outlined an amendment he is proposing to RSA 173b, as follows:

I. Upon a showing of an immediate and present danger of abuse, the court may enter temporary orders to protect the plaintiff with or without actual notice to defendant. Such showing shall require testimony from the plaintiff and shall be under oath and on the record. Both parties shall be entitled to a copy of the record of the plaintiff's showing, at the respective party's expense. An audio recording shall be a sufficient record. Either party shall, upon request, be timely provided with a copy of the record created during the plaintiff's showing prior to any further hearing. The court may issue such temporary orders by telephone or facsimile. Such telephonically issued orders shall be made by a district or superior court judge to a law enforcement officer, shall be valid in any jurisdiction in the state, and shall be effective until the close of the next regular court business day. Such orders shall be returnable to the district court where the plaintiff resides or to which the plaintiff has fled, unless otherwise ordered by the issuing justice. If non-telephonic temporary orders are made ex parte, the party against whom such relief is issued may file a written request with the clerk of the court and request a hearing on such orders. Such hearing shall be held no less than 3 business days and no more than 5 business days after the request is received by the clerk. Such hearings may constitute the final hearing described in RSA 173-B:3, VII. Such temporary relief may direct the defendant to relinquish to a peace officer any and all firearms and ammunition in the control, ownership, or possession of the defendant, or any other person on behalf of the defendant for the duration of the protective order. Other temporary relief may include:.....

Scott Garman, Mike Geanoulis, and Joe Mastromarino also support this amendment effort.

Rep. David Bickford also asked for any suggestions for changes to make to the Commission for the renewal bill he is willing to work on. Joe Mastromarino noted that assignment of executive positions on the Commission would be easier to take care of if they could be assigned by a vote of the Commission.

Meeting Schedule:

Joe Mastromarino noted that the last Friday in November is the day after Thanksgiving, and that there are problems getting the LOB room on that date as well as the last Friday in December. Due to this, the next meeting will be held on Friday, December 1.

RADAR United Nations Resolution:

Mike Geanoulis presented a resolution created by RADAR which points out biases and inaccuracies in a recent United Nations report on violence against women, and noted that RADAR is currently looking for organization co-signers. The resolution is endorsed by Dr. Murray Straus from the University of New Hampshire, and Lee Newman's SAFE-NH organization.

The resolution and its signatories can be found on-line here:

<http://www.mediaradar.org/docs/UN-ViolenceReport-Resolution.pdf>

Mike distributed copies of this resolution and asked that the Commission sign-on to it. At the time 47 other organizations had signed on to the resolution.

Scott Garman moved that the Commission on the Status of Men to sign on to the UN resolution, Mike Geanoulis seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

The meeting adjourned at 4 PM.